DARPA-BAA-12-03

Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated: October 21, 2011

GENERAL INFORMATION

Q: What DARPA seedlings predate this program? Are reports available?
A: There were no preceding programs, but a series of workshops were held on the subject of Narrative Networks. Presentations can be found at the teaming website: https://team.sainc.com/N2.

Q: If my research is relevant in this field, but is not geared specifically to meet these goals, is there a solicitation that I can respond to?
A: Yes. DARPA/DSO has an Open solicitation (DARPA-BAA-11-65) for which responses are being collected through 9 Aug 2012.

PROPOSALS

Q: What information is being requested on the line "Identifying Number" on the Password Encryption Form?
A: If submitting via our website (https://dsobaa.sainc.com), the Identifying Number will be automatically generated by our system following the completion of step one of the online submission process (online cover sheet). If submitting via hardcopy/CD-ROM, this field should be left blank.

Q: Can a prime or collaborator be an international company?
A: Yes, international companies and universities are acceptable.

Q: Is it acceptable for a bidder to propose empirical research outside of the US, assuming that there are no export control or classification issues?
A: Yes, assuming compliance with export control regulations, as stated in the BAA.

Q: Is subcontracting to a National Lab or Federally Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC) permitted? Are there any collaboration restrictions?
A: Government entities are permitted – proposer should comply with the section on FFRDCs as stated within the BAA. There are no collaboration restrictions.

Q: If a proposer intends to address all three Technical Areas, should all three be included within one integrated proposal?
A: Yes. As stated in the BAA, "Teams that propose to multiple Technical Areas should ensure they provide traceability between work proposed in sub-goals that cross Technical Areas to ensure proposals are unified and coherent."

Q: Suppose that a proposal addresses 2 or more subgoals of TA 2 and also addresses some, but not all, of the subgoals in TA 1 and TA 3. Will this be considered responsive to TA 2? That is, is a complete response to TA 2 together with a partial response to the other TAs acceptable, or should TA 2 responses limit themselves to TA 2 subgoals only?

A: Yes, as stated in the BAA - "Proposals are considered responsive to Technical Area Two if they address more than one of the sub-goals described above. Proposals that include additional sub-goals are also welcome and will be considered for funding." Please note, however, the proposal described below would NOT be considered responsive to TAs 1 or 3.

Q: Could you please advise if responses to DARPA-BAA-12-03 should be focused and budgeted only for Phase 1? Are you expecting to see proposals include full pricing for the phase 3 option? Given that DARPA may "rationalize the partnerships" between phases, should we address Phases I&II in the technical proposal or all three Phases?

A: Yes, proposals should address and include pricing for all phases.

Q: In the description of TA-2 SubGoal 2, the paragraph seems to be focused on neurobiology systems, but the 4th sentence states "Explore the differential influence of stories on neurotransmitter systems as compared to other environmental stimuli." Should this reference "neurobiology systems" instead of "neurotransmitter systems"?

A: "Neurotransmitter systems" was included intentionally to solicit performers to focus on multiple levels of analysis when examining memory, learning and identity. An examination of neurotransmitter modulations related to memory, learning and identity--or a more broad examination of the same topics at the systems level--would both fall under TA 2 Sub-goal Two.

Q: In order to fully satisfy a Sub-Goal within a Technical Area, do you expect proposers to address all sentences/tasks contained within the description of the Sub-Goal?

A: No, performers are not expected to address every question posed beneath a sub-goal. For instance, a performer addressing TA2 Sub-goal One may choose to focus on oxytocin only and not identify "novel neurotransmitters or other biologically active molecules" modulated by narrative influence. The bold sub-goals for each technical area state the broad intent of the work to be addressed in the overall technical area.

Q: Page 19, Section III. Detailed Proposal Information, it states that "the page length for the SOW will be dependent on the amount of the effort". Does this mean that the SOW can be more than 4 pages if it has a certain dollar value? Is so, what are those page limits and associated dollar values?

A: No - it means that that all 4 pages may not be used for every proposal.

Q: Is there any flexibility within the Maximum Page Limits for each section while keeping the total proposal length at 40 pages?
A: No.

Q: The submission site (https://dsobaa.sainc.com) states that the zipped file size must be no more than 50 megabytes. However, the encryption instructions state that the file size is limited to only 25 megabytes. Is the file size of the submission 50 MB?
A: Yes, 50 MB.

COST

Q: What is the overall DARPA budget for GRAPHS? Are there funding limits for individual proposals?
A: The investment profile for GRAPHS has not been fixed at this time. The final program will depend on the proposals selected for funding. At this time, no single-project funding limits have been set.

Q: Can subcontractors send their fully disclosed cost proposal to the email address listed in the BAA (DARPA-BAA-12-03@darpa.mil) rather than sending in a sealed package (hard copy)?
A: Yes.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Q: How many awards are anticipated?
A: The number of awards will depend on the merits of the proposals received and funds available.

Q: Is there an estimated start date for the project?
No, the program start date is largely dependent upon source selection and subsequent contract negotiation – both can vary in length considerably.

TECHNICAL

Q: Is my topic consistent with the objectives of the BAA?
A: DARPA is not able to suggest specific research approaches. If you feel that your chosen effort is consistent with the objectives of the BAA and capable of meeting the goals stated within the BAA, then you should feel free to propose them. It is strongly encouraged that you read the BAA carefully. It is your burden to make clear within your proposal that your approach is supportive of your innovative claims, and includes a detailed analysis of the technical motivation.